

Long Road Home

by ZeeCap

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Summary: Harry falls through the veil in the Department of Mysteries trying to save Sirius and dies, at least in a sense. An ancient truth is revealed that may turn the war around, or maybe end the entire reality. Ultimately Harry/Fleur. Rated M for language and violence. Harry will be really OOC after a while.

1. Intro

A/N "All right, for starters, as everybody says, I own nothing. This story is something I've always wanted to do, and yes, It is my first fic and constructive criticism is always welcome :). As I'm not American, British, or of any nationality in which English is the first language, sometimes I may sometimes use expressions that are not british and therefore doesn't fit with a Harry Potter fanfic, but if you point it out to me I'll correct it. That said, this is just the intro. I'm not sure how often I'll be able to upload with college's tests coming up, but I'll try to do it as fast as I can. This is story will also have a bunch of "minor crossovers" with a lot of stuff, in a way that I will put characters and locations in it from a lot of other stuff, but completely out of their original context. Simply because I like how they are designed, or their names, or how they are in general. There is no need to be familiar with these characters or locations at all to enjoy this.

Intro "Through the veil"

It felt like time had slowed down. Harry could be sure that that moment took longer than the entire fifth year. Every single detail of the scene in front of him promising to haunt his nights forever. Bellatrix's wand firmly grasped in her hand in front of her, as the curse hit Sirius square in the chest. He could see the small droplets of sweat forming on her forehead, most likely because of the effort it took to cast such magic. Harry wouldn't know for sure, since the dark arts weren't something he was familiar with. He saw the exact

moment in which Sirius' feet left the ground and his body was sent flying back. But what would forever be burned in his mind and for years to come wake him up with heart racing and drenched in cold sweat, was the subtle smile that graced his godfather's lips at that final moment. As his back touched the strange fabric of the veil, the most beautiful white light illuminated the Death Chamber for a fraction of a second.

He barely noticed Remus' arms coming over his shoulders, almost trembling in anticipation for what Harry might do. The adrenaline in his blood, though, was faster and Harry's legs started moving. His mind went blank and only one thing mattered. As time came back to its normal pace, Harry covered the distance between him and the last link he had with his family in no more than two seconds. Completely deaf to the cries of his friends and members of the order behind him, the only thing he heard as he flung his body, hand in front to try and catch his godfather, was Bellatrix' maniacal laughter. Everything went black.

That same feeling that rushed his mind the first time he laid eyes on the veil with his friends in tow threatened to take over again. He felt at home, whole, and so he surrendered to it. The last thing to cross his mind as he lost consciousness was her eyes. Her deep blue eyes. And then he was at peace.

2. Grief

Chapter 1 - Grief

She awoke startled. The sound of the kettle warning her that the tea was ready. She had never been one to drink tea, but since she got in England to work at Gringotts she found herself drinking it more and more. She got up from the armchair, a little surprised to have fallen asleep and dropped the book that was sitting in her lap. As she bent down to pick it up the memories of the story came rushing her mind.

>"What a strange book."She thought taking a look at the cover. A man in a long overcoat and cowboy hat with his back facing her, as a black ominous looking tower rose up in the back, in the middle of what seemed a desert with crows flying everywhere.

When she fell asleep the hero had just single handedly massacred an entire village with only two muggle weapons, leaving dead men, women and children in his wake. She didn't know what to think of it. Even if his actions were in self defense, how could that be considered a hero? But she enjoyed the story nonetheless, she had a feeling that the plot would only get deeper and deeper.

Remembering the tea, that was still making its shrieking lament, she laid the book on the small table in front of the armchair and found her way to the kitchen. With a flick of her wand the fire under the kettle has been extinguished. She raised her eyes to glance at the clock on the wall. 4 a.m. It had been six hours since Bill left.

She had just arrived from work to find Bill on the couch completely lost in his book.

" '_Ello, Bill " She greeted, taking the redhead away from the

pages._

" _Hey Fleur. Everything all right at work?"_

"_A bit boring, not much to do today. 'ow long 'ave you been home?"

_

"_Three hours now. Ragnok told everyone to go home early. Something about a top secret operation in our sector."_

" _Zat's odd. And what are you reading?" She asked curiously dropping her purse on the arm of the couch and taking her coat off._

"_The Dark Tower series by Stephen King. It's about this man and his journey to find a mythical tower that supposedly holds everything together." He answered excitedly._

"_Everyzing what?"_

"_Everything. Time, space, other dimensions. I'm almost finishing the last one."_

"_Seems... complex."_

"_Not much to be honest. Here, for when you get bored." He opened the drawer of the cabinet besides the couch and threw an old dusty book to her._

She caught it with one hand and looked at the cover.

"_Ze Dark Tower Volume one, Ze Gunslinger." She read out loud. "All right, I'll take a look. But nowâ€|" a mischievous glint graced her eyes. " I wanna know everyzing." Her smile grew bigger as Bill blushed._

"_About what?"_

" 'Ow was wiz Leonard yesterday of course." She sat down beside him taking his hands in hers._

"_It wasâ€|amazing?"

>"Did 'e ask?" She asked excited.

"_Not yet..." He seemed dejected._

"_I'm sorry. But don't worry about eet. We know 'e will soon, don't we?" She tried to comfort him._

"_ye.." He couldn't finish his reply as at that moment a bright silver light came rushing through the window._

_ They jumped to their feets as the phoenix Patronus made its way to the center table in front of them._

"_The Ministry has been breached. Summoning William Weasley for emergency meeting." The thunderous voice of Albus Dumbledore spread through the small apartment they both shared._

_Fleur looked at Bill. His face had been drained of all color. She knew what that meant. There would be a battle. For the Death Eaters

to break into the Ministry like this could only mean one thing. They had found the weapon they were looking for. The worry and the fear were clear on Bill's face. Fleur's wand was ready at hand._

"_Let's go." She said determined._

"_What?" Bill turned to face her as the Patronus dissipated between them._

"_I'm fighting as well"_

"_No, you're not. You're staying here, got it?"_

"_Butâ€¦!" She made to protest._

"_Look, you have done nothing but help me since you got here and we moved together. Now it's my turn, ok?" He was serious, his face as if set in stone. "Let me at least keep you safe. Remember why you came back."_

That made Fleur reconsider. She put her wand back in her pocket, a sad look on her face.

"_Besides, you're not officially part of the Order. Dumbledore would have my head if I brought a civilian to war." He grinned at her as he got hold of a bit of floo powder and stepped in the fireplace._

"_Bill" She called before he could be taken away. "Come back safe, you hear?" _

He just nodded, smile still in place.

"_12 Grimmauld Place" and he was gone in a blaze of green flames._

_She made her way slowly to the armchair, worry settling in her heart. _

"_Might as well distract myself" She thought as she picked up the book again, taking another look at the cover before opening it._

"_Ze man in black fled across ze desert, and ze gunslinger followed."_

_

"Merde" She cursed out loud, turning on the tap of the sink and putting her now burnt hand under the cool running water. "Should 'ave used my wand. What kind of witch am I?" She berated herself for trying to pick up the hot kettle with her hands as the pain subsided. She glanced at the window's glass over the sink. As always her appearance was impeccable. It didn't matter that she had just woken up. No trace of bags under her eyes could be found, no imperfection on her skin or strand of her silver blonde hair out of place. Her veela blood took care of that.

"My curse." She thought. Not that it wasn't useful, never having to worry about spending hours in front of the mirror to leave the house.

But still, when someone had a magic power capable of seducing everyone around them without their consent, life could be hard. Since she could remember, she had to deal with boys doing idiotic things to impress her and the jealousy of the girls that didn't also fall under her allure. There wasn't many people willing to be her friend and live under her shadow. Not even Bill was completely immune, even though he was extremely resistant due to his preferences. She often would catch him ogling at her with misty eyes. But never something that a few finger snaps in front of his eyes couldn't take care of. She never met anyone completely immune to her charm. Well, anyone except for him.

Averting her eyes from the reflection and taking her hand from the water, she withdrew her wand from her pocket and levitated the kettle, pouring its content in a cup. Putting the tea bag into the hot water, she took the cup and made her way to the living room to try and drown the sinking feeling that refused to leave her stomach. The clock now showed 4:05 a.m..

"He iz taking too long". She knew that an attack in the Ministry meant that there would be a lot of things to take care of afterwards and so she shouldn't be expecting him to get home early. But six hours were a lot, and she was worried. It didn't matter how good Bill was at dueling.

As she took her first step into the living room, the flames in the fireplace became emerald green once more and her heart jumped in her chest.

"Zank God!" As Bill stepped out of the fireplace, Fleur ran to give him a hug, completely forgetting about the tea still in her hand.

"Mon Dieu, I'm so sorry, Bill". She apologized pointing her wand at his shirt. "Exaresco."

Bill felt his chest become hotter, as the already hot tea slowly dried.

"That's fine." He said "Look, Fleur. We have to talk."

She felt so relieved to see him getting out of the fireplace that she missed his state. Now as she took him in, she realized what he must have been through. His clothes and face completely dirty, a small cut on his face and a bigger one on his forearm, his sleeve stained with dry blood. But what caught her attention was his expression. He looked sad.

"You're hurt. Let me take a look at eet, while you tell me everyzing, ok?" He only nodded as she led him to the kitchen, motioning for him to sit on a stool. She moved to the cupboard, rummaging for the supply box.

"W..when I got to Grimmauld Place, everyone was already there." He began as she sat facing him with the box now in hand. She didn't know much of healing spells, but a cut like that she could probably manage.

"Zis may take a while, never been too good wiz healing spells." She interrupted him, pointing her wand at the gash on his forearm

"Tergeo"

"Dumbledore was furious, never seen him like that. The Death Eaters broke into the Department of Mysteries." He paused, deciding how to continue as Fleur cleaned the dry blood on his arm.

"Vulnera Sanentur" She muttered, the gash now starting to close.

"They needed something there, Fleur. Something...that had to do with Harry." At this her eyes found his. "And to get it, they needed him. I don't know how, but they managed to get him and his friends to go to the Ministry."

She didn't like where this was going. Could this be the cause of the feeling she had all night? Would she feel it if it happened? Her hand now was trembling, no doubt making it harder for the cut in Bill's arm to close.

"A fight broke out, of course. We were in a room... Dumbledore explained it to us afterwards. There was a structure there in the middle, made of stone. Kinda like a big doorway. Dumbledore called it The Veil. He told us that the entire Ministry was built around it when it was discovered." He paused again to organize his thoughts "It used to be used for executions, when those still happened. The convicted was thrown through and nothing would come out the other side. Dumbledore seems to think that it is a portal to the realm of the dead."

Her hands started to tremble even more, the gash on Bill's arm completely forgotten.

"Everyone was fighting against someone. I was dueling against Nott, and Sirius...Sirius was facing Bellatrix Lestrange." His voice became weak " At some point, she got him. Nobody realized what had happened until it was too late. He fell through it. Through the veil, that is."

Fleur's eyes started to water at that. She met Sirius, she joked with him, they had lunch together in that haunted house the year before. The five of them. She couldn't believe it. Her heart ached to think about what Harry was feeling right now. Bill averted his gaze from hers, now determined to stare at a spot on the ground. He couldn't face her for what was to come.

"He... He tried to save him. Before any of us could do anything, he was running." Her watered eyes widened, her mouth opened a bit. In another situation, it would have been comic. "He fell, Fleur. I'm so sorry." He was crying now as well " Harry is dead."

She got up, her wand falling to the floor. Her knees trembled, her legs felt numb. She didn't know if she could take a step. Her face now completely wet as the tears ran freely. She couldn't believe it. For the first time since she found out she was bonded to him, she tapped at the connection. She needed to be sure. But she couldn't feel him. The desperation was too much. She gathered all the energy she had and just ran to her room leaving a crestfallen Bill behind. She needed to be alone.

Albus Dumbledore paced in his study. In all of his oh so many years, he felt like he's never been so puzzled

"What am I missing? This shouldn't have happened. It couldn't have happened." He mused trying to make sense of what had happened in the Department of Mysteries. "...and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives..." He remembered the words Professor Trelawney spoke to him all those years ago.

But Harry didn't die at the hands of Lord Voldemort. And now that he was dead, did that mean that nobody else would be able to vanquish the Dark Lord? Dumbledore's heart was a mess. He felt so much sadness for the boy that had been like a grandson to him. But he couldn't let himself grieve. There was no time. Voldemort was out in the open now, with Fudge getting in the Ministry just in enough time to see him vanish with his own eyes. Which meant that he was going to act. There was no more time to waste making plans.

He moved slowly to where his Phoenix Fawks was perched. Stroking her feathers gently he muttered

"Hello old friend. What do you say about we make a trip?" He had a lead to go on, and now that Harry wasn't there, he didn't have to wait anymore. Fawks hooted softly, and a bright flame engulfed the two. As Dumbledore vanished from his office, a doubt crossed his mind.

"Does that mean that the one inside him is no more?"

****A/N -**** Hey guys, for those who said the first chapter was way to short, don't worry about it, it really was just an intro. I don't think I'll ever post reeeeeally long chapters, but they will be at least as long as this one. Thanks for the reviews, and please, let me know if this format for the flashback in italics is too tiring to read. If so, I'll find another way.
>Thanks again for those who took their time to review and for those who followed and favorited :)<p>

3. Flaming Rose

The sweet smell invaded his nostrils as he shot up. Sitting straight, his hand going straight to his collarbone. Good, it was still there. He tried to concentrate as consciousness washed over him like a bucket of cold water. One unknown word repeating involuntarily in his mind over and over like a mantra.

"Can'-Ka no Rey" A name maybe? It certainly was familiar, but where had he heard it before?

He breathed deeply, and doing all he could to calm his nerves down, took a look around. It had to be a dream, it simply couldn't be true. Flowers. Roses. Everywhere, as far as the eyes could see. Maybe he died and this was heaven. But was there pyramids in heaven? He could see two, not too far from where he was, one to his left and one to his right. He stood up, straightening his glasses.

"Bugger" Left lens was broken. "Nothing I can't fix" he thought, going for his wand in his back pocket. It wasn't there. "Maybe it

fell in between the roses."

He bent down to look, but only succeeded to prick his fingers on the thorns.

"Wait a minute" Looking closely, there was something strange about those roses. Right at the middle of their petals, a small spot glowed yellow as if it was a ridiculously small sun. It was hypnotic to say the least.

He didn't know how long he spent admiring the beauty of the "mini sun" as he now called it in his head, but then, out of nowhere, as if punched by a professional boxer, it all came back to him. He was at the Ministry, there had been a fight. Sirius fell. He felt his fingers getting numb.

"Sirius" He muttered. "SIRIUS" He yelled. He should be here as well, right? "SIRIUS" he kept going, that weird name never leaving the background of his mind, like a broken record, making his head start to ache. "Can'-Ka no Rey." What the hell could that be?

The sun chastised his skin and his lips were dry. He looked up, arms protecting his eyes. Maybe he could get an approximate time and direction looking at the sun.

"What the.." Harry's mouth fell. There was light, for sure. But absolutely there was no sun. Anywhere. The sky was completely blue, not a single cloud for it to hide, and yet. No sun.

"Ok, so I'm in a place where there are small suns inside roses, but no sun in the sky." To say he was completely lost was an understatement. He got there falling through that weird curtain, so maybe he could go back by going through it again. His efforts, though, were in vain. He first tried putting his arm through what now was simply a stone archway in the middle of a rose field. No fabric moved between the pillars anymore. When putting his arm through didn't give any results, he started jumping through it. From one side to the other, over and over.

It wasn't much later when he gave up, now desperation getting to him. Wherever this strange place was, he was stuck there.

"Well, no point in staying still, I suppose" He thought, determined to get out of there as soon as possible.

Not really knowing where to go, he decided to go back to the exactly spot where he woke up, right in front of the archway and just walk straight. If he was lucky, maybe he would get somewhere. A village maybe, or maybe someone who could help him. It didn't matter to him, as long as it was anything other than roses and pyramids. With that thought in mind, he started his march.

He walked for what must have been two hours. It was hard to know with no sun. As he walked, he realized he couldn't feel the rose's thorns through his jeans anymore. In fact, he couldn't feel them at all anymore, even though they were there. It seemed like they were bowing out of his way, trying to guide his steps.

He was about to take a break to give his legs a rest when he came to a sudden stop. At the horizon, he could see something now. He

couldn't distinguish what yet, but it definitely wasn't another pyramid. Excited to finally be getting somewhere, he forced his legs to work faster, pushing aside the fatigue. Soon he found out that concentrating on the mantra the little voice insisted on reciting in his head, rather than try to suppress it, eased his headache.

The figure on the horizon slowly became clearer. Now Harry could see it was a tower, all made of black stones. It reminded him of the Clermont-Ferrand's cathedral Fleur had shown him in a picture over a year earlier. He felt a pang in his heart. He always did when he thought of her. But she was with Bill now, the twins told him. She was happy. There was nothing he could do now. After all, he was the one to push her away. He put those thoughts aside, there was no point in getting depressed now. He had bigger problems now. Like getting to that tower.

* * *

><p>Dumbledore landed in the middle of what seemed to be a clearing. He looked around as Fawkes flew from his shoulder, to perch on the remains of a tree probably long cut down. There was no doubt in his mind that the bird took him to the right place. The magic in those birds was something not even he could fathom. One of the many mysteries in the world still to be uncovered.<p>

He slowly made his way to the stump where Fawkes landed, until something caught his eye. Right there, on the side, carved on the surface of the wood, the confirmation that his trust in the phoenix wasn't misplaced.

"Smart girl" He said, stroking the Phoenix's feathers. He bent down to examine the crude drawing. The initials MG and TR enveloped by a heart. The result of a young girl in love. Although the idea that she was the only one was sad. But he wasn't there to feel sympathy for MÃ©rope. He needed to find where she lived.

He knew the shack was in a clearing in the middle of the woods, just like the one he was now, so he did the only sensible thing to do and marched into the trees, leaving Fawkes behind. The bird could be an immense help on what was most likely to come, but his strategic mind told him to leave her behind and have her as an insurance. If there was danger, she would know. She would come.

The sun had risen only one hour or so before and the cold morning air felt good on Dumbledore's skin, helping him forget, at least for a moment the unfortunate events from the night before. Indeed, he felt no need for a warming charm. Soon, a trail showed itself to him and he took it. A simple pathway of dirt in the middle of the trees.

Dumbledore couldn't be sure of when or how, but he suddenly took notice of the darkness that fell over him. He looked up. The treetops didn't let any light go though now. Without uttering a word, he casted the lumus charm illuminating the tip of his wand in front of him. He expected this, of course. That darkness wasn't natural, this forest wasn't supposed to be this dense. And if that said something, it was that he was right and his fears were true. And so help them God.

He kept on the trail, his ocean blue eyes paying attention to every

moving thing his wand was capable of shining light on. He felt the terrain become more and more irregular as he forced forward, treading carefully. Something was telling him that if he was to trip, he wouldn't be able to get back up. There was definitely some sort of dark magic trying to keep him away from wherever he was getting to, and it would probably become a lot worse as he got closer. He was sure now that he was going to find what he came to if he persisted.

He had been waiting for the right moment, so he could bring Harry along, start his training, or at least try and teach him as much as he could, to give him the hope he needed to fight. But now he was dead, and with him, the certainty Dumbledore had that the boy was needed in the war. If Harry had died, not killed by Voldemort, but by mere chance, then the prophecy somehow was a mistake. Which meant Voldemort could be killed by anyone, and this was the first step to do that.

A noise to his side caught his attention and he mentally kicked himself for getting distracted by idle thoughts. It sounded like a soft humming coming from somewhere further into the darkness of the forest.

"_Revelio_" He casted already without much hope and, indeed, nothing happened. He knew he should stay on the path. If he deviated from it, there would be no return. Would Fawkes be able to find him and bring him to safety if that happened? Would any of the thousands of spells he knew be able to help him at all? Knowing Tom Riddle, the answer was simple. It may have been a mistake leaving the Phoenix behind. But now was too late, he wouldn't think of it. As long as he didn't follow the humming he should be fine.

He persevered. When the _lumus_ charm wasn't enough to illuminate the trees beside him, he persevered. When the humming became singing, he persevered. When the singing came closer, he persevered. When the ghostly voice of MÃ©rope Gaunt begged him to follow her amidst the verses and the goosebumps took over his arms and neck for the first time in decades, he persevered. When he started considering to follow her. He persevered.

Light. Only a white dot in the distance. The ghost " illusion, not even he was sure anymore " had given up trying to make him give up and now hope found its way back to his heart. As he got closer to the end, the dot became smaller. The trees wouldn't let their prey escape so easily. But little did they know that they were fighting the most " arguably " powerful wizard in existence. A simple flick of the wrist, and the last obstacles in his way were sent flying, leaves in the air where their supports were a mere second ago. And so he was free.

He could have been surprised if he didn't know with whom he was dealing with. It was night already, even though it didn't feel like more than three hours had passed inside the forest. The light he saw and gravely mistook for sunshine was far from it. About ten meters in front of him, the old Gaunt shack was burning, flames as high as the treetops. It wasn't fiendfyre, but those weren't normal flames either, and dealing with them without knowledge could prove itself deadly. But it wasn't like he had a choice. The ring should be somewhere inside the destroyed house, and after what he'd been through in the forest, plus the abnormal fire, it was clear he was

right about what the ring was.

Raising his arms to his sides as if being crucified, and then lowering them, pointing his wand to the ground, he muttered.

"Fluctus" Small droplets of water began to form in the air, as if sucked from the trees around him and the grass beneath his feet. "Unda" The droplets frantic became like a river swirling above his head. He never had to concentrate like this to form it. Maybe the fight in the Department of Mysteries took its toll on him, or maybe he truly was just old. Concentrating even harder he completed the motion, now pointing his wand to the burning shack, the floating river was sent with immense force to its target.

The water bathed the building completely, flooding the entire area, before escaping through the woods. Dumbledore didn't have time to cheer, though, as a second later, a small spark inside the house ignited the fire once again. Water wouldn't be the solution.

"This is private property." The voice struck fear into his heart. It sounded more like a tired growl, a multitude of voices overlapped, but one more distinct than the rest. It came from the hole where the shack's door used to be.

One leg appeared in the doorframe. The figure slowly making its way to the porch. The burning body of Marvolo Gaunt stepped heavily on the grass just outside his fiery home. A jet of steam shooting from beneath his feet as they connected with the remaining water on the ground. Tom had found his corpse, gave him flesh, gave him voice, gave him life. No. Not life. Just a puppet now.

"Disgusting...little...squib." Gaunt spat full of venom. He raised his arms in front of him and Dumbledore saw small pieces of his rotten arm falling to the floor, the blood dripping from his four extended fingers.

The smell of the burning body made Dumbledore's stomach curl as he fought the need to throw up. Water didn't work against those flames and conjuring wind could have the opposite effect and make it stronger. He pointed his wand straight ahead, conjuring a concussive spell that sent the dead puppet flying full speed to the side of the burning shack. He knew that wouldn't do anything, but he needed time for the next one. In magic, fire could bring life just as much as it could destroy it. He needed to put it out and magic or not, fire was fire and without oxygen it couldn't burn. He began making small shapes of eight all around him with his wand. The grotesque puppet was already back on its feet, as if nothing had happened and making his way back to Dumbledore.

"filthy...muggle...my...own...daughter..." His heavy steps began to get quicker, completely oblivious to the dirt starting to collect above his head.

Dumbledore now had both his hands above his head, concentrating to gather as much of dirt as he could. If he couldn't kill what was already dead, then he would bury it instead. The flame zombie was

closing in now, he had no time anymore, it would have to do.

"PONDUS TERRAM." He shouted, releasing in a second half a ton of dirt and rocks that went plummeting full force over Gaunt, his past insults buried with him.

Dumbledore bent over, hands over knees to try and catch his breath for a moment. If he wasn't so old, this would have been finished much quicker and without sweat. But he had no time to berate himself. In a sudden explosion, the small hill made of dirt and rocks went flying in every direction. He managed to cast a shield in the last second. It couldn't be. As the dust settled, the figure of Marvolo Gaunt stood there, in front of him, still on fire, still cursing.

"Die...MÃ@rope...whore..." The last words spat with more hate than all the others.

He didn't know what to do anymore. He was exhausted, every year of his life weighing on his shoulders. That's when the singing could be heard. Looking up, Dumbledore let a small smile find its way to his lips. His trusted friend came to him. It must have taken all this time for her to break through the defenses around the area, but she did it. Marvellous creature. Without even looking to her master, Fawkes dived full speed, bursting into a coat of flames and hitting the puppet square in the chest.

"Die...why..." were his last words, with such sadness that almost made Dumbledore feel sorry for the man. Almost.

Both Fawkes and Gaunt were sent flying inside the house, where a huge burst of fire could be seen coming out from every window. And then, no more fire. The carcass of the once home of the Gaunts now stood shyly in the middle of the clearing, ready to collapse at any moment. Dumbledore didn't waste any time. In seconds he was in the living room.

Nothing inside. Whatever the family had was lost in the fire. Only a skeleton could be seen in a corner.

"Morfin" He muttered. For some reason, Voldemort didn't want his uncle to burn. Maybe to remind him whenever he came back to check on his soul, where his true roots were. To keep him grounded. Who could know?

Two meters in front of him, a small baby bird freed itself from a pile of ashes on the ground. He knelt to help it.

"Thank you, old friend. Thank you" He said softly, carefully putting the baby phoenix in a pocket on his robes.

Something caught his eyes. A glint to his left. The ring Marvolo used to wear in life with such pride, now laid in the middle of a ruined house. He picked it up. Not wanting to spend one more second in there, he disappeared. There were no more barriers protecting the clearing.

* * *

><p>He stepped in his office, exhausted from the day he had had. Pulling the chair to sit, he reached his hand to a bowl over his desk to help himself to a sweet. Something to help him cope with what he had seen. That's when he realized. He had put the ring on.<p>

End
file.